



**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION DIVISION  
1155 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1155**

**JUL 29 2019**

Ref: 19-F-1550

Julia Rock  
MuckRock News  
DEPT MR 76975  
411A Highland Ave  
Somerville, MA 02144-2516

Dear Ms. Rock:

This is the interim response to your July 10, 2019 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to US AFRICOM, a copy of which is attached for your convenience. We received your request from US AFRICOM on July 24, 2019 and assigned it case number 19-F-1550. We ask that you use this number when referring to your request.

This FOIA office only processes requests for the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and the Joint Staff (JS). There is no central FOIA processing point for records for the entire Department of Defense (DoD). FOIA processing is decentralized and delegated to those officials of the Military Departments and various DoD Components who generate and/or maintain the records being sought or reviewed. For future reference, you may find links to the non-OSD/JS DoD FOIA Requester Service Centers on our website:  
<http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/>.

According to the FOIA's legislative history, a description of records requested is sufficient if it enables a professional employee of the agency who is familiar with the subject area of the request to locate the records with a reasonable amount of effort. Courts have also stated that a request is reasonably described if the agency is able to determine "precisely" what records are being requested. The "reasonably described" requirement exists because the FOIA was not intended to reduce government agencies to full-time investigators on behalf of requesters. As such, it is the requester's responsibility to frame requests with sufficient particularity to ensure that searches are not unreasonably burdensome, and to enable the searching agency to determine precisely what records are being sought.

As it stands, your request is too broad, not reasonably described and difficult to interpret. We ask that you work with us as we need your cooperation to give us more specifics. Courts have held that requests using phrases such as "all, or any and all; refer or related to in any way; including, but not limited to" are not reasonably descriptive. You have set out your request in this manner and in addition, you ask for "All communications and memos between April 12019 and today, regarding 'A Federal Strategy to Ensure Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals; all communications and memos dated between January 1 2019 and today, containing the non case-sensitive phrases 'critical minerals' AND #climate change' OR 'renewable energy.'" For communication records, we request that you provide specific "to" and "from" recipients, by name or job title, and subject of the communication. Please also name the specific

office, or offices within OSD you would like our office to direct to conduct a search for your FOIA request 19-F-1550. We also need you to provide further description as to what records you are seeking. If we have not heard from you by close of business **August 23, 2019**, we will believe that you are no longer interested and close the request. Please help us to narrow your request by providing the additional information we have requested above so that we can commence the search for your FOIA request.

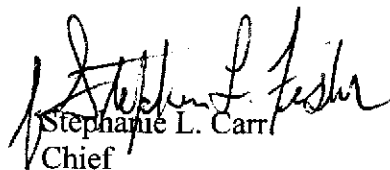
Your request has been placed in our complex processing queue and is being worked based on the order in which the request was received. Our current administrative workload is approximately 2,956 open requests. If you have any questions or wish to discuss the reformulation of your request or an alternative time frame for the processing of your request, you may contact Elise Grisel, the Action Officer assigned to case number 19-F-1550, at [elise.m.grisel.civ@mail.mil](mailto:elise.m.grisel.civ@mail.mil) or (571) 372-0440.

The OSD/JS FOIA Public Liaison, Darrell Williams, is available at 571-372-0462 or by email at [OSD.FOIALiaison@mail.mil](mailto:OSD.FOIALiaison@mail.mil) to answer any concerns about the foregoing. Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows:

Office of Government Information Services  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS  
College Park, MD 20740  
E-mail: [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov)  
Telephone: 202-741-5770  
Fax: 202-741-5769  
Toll-free: 1-877-684-6448

We regret the delay in responding to your request and appreciate your patience.

Sincerely,

  
Stephanie L. Carr  
Chief

Enclosure:  
As stated